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AUTHOR Walling, Susan
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ABSTRACT

The Allied Health Certificate Program at Massachusetts' Bunker Hill Community College has been successfully integrating academic and vocational education since 1986. The integration of English as a Second Language, academic education, and occupational training was a direct response to requests from business and industry for a competitive workforce. To date, the program has trained 560 students from the Greater Boston area for patient care positions in health care facilities. The target population of the program has been low income and/or welfare recipients who have had limited success in school. Over the past three evaluation cycles, enrolling a yearly average of 100 students, the program had a 90% retention rate with over 50% of participants receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Key elements of the program include the following: (1) occupational skills training; (2) integrated basic education and skills training; (3) basic and advanced college courses; (4) employment skills training; (5) innovative teaching methods, such as hands-on activities, role playing, and tutoring; (6) college credits for students; (7) established relationships with area health care providers; (8) academic and personal counseling; (9) individualized career planning; (10) training in job search skills and placement assistance; (11) effective management tools to track student progress; (12) the use of student portfolios; and (13) outcomes tracking. The occupational training offers five certificate programs: patient care assistant, medical assistant, medical lab assistant, phlebotomy technician, and health careers preparation. (KP)

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ED 387 150

# *Integrating Academic and Vocational Skills*

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**Susan Walling**

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**Paper presented at the Annual Professional Development Conference (1st, Roxbury Crossing, MA, June 3, 1995)**

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## KEYNOTE SPEECH AT ROXBURY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Members of Bunker Hill's Allied Health Certificate Staff, Susan Walling, Karen Kautz and Elizabeth Sumorok, were invited to present the keynote speech to the First Annual Professional Development Conference at Roxbury Community College on Saturday, June 3rd 1995. The topic of the presentation was **Integrating Academic and Vocational Skills.**

The Allied Health Certificate Program at Bunker Hill has been successfully integrating academic and vocational education since 1986, and the program was highlighted in a monogram written by W. Norton Grubb of the School of Education, University of California at Berkeley.

Susan Walling, Director of the Allied Health Program, began the presentation by explaining the reasons for the programs' enormous success. The integration of ESL, other academic education and vocational training, is a direct response to the request from business and industry for a competitive workforce. This means giving students "lifelong learning", relating education to work, and making education respond to the employment realities of the information age economy of the year 2000.

In 1986 the program began training 20 students a year. Now, in 1995, the program trains over 100 students annually, offering five training options including, Patient Care Assistant, Medical Assistant, Phlebotomy Technician, and Medical Lab Assistant to limited English and native speakers alike.

To date, the program has trained 560 students, of whom 80% have either gained employment and/or continued their education. In addition a consistent 90% retention rate attests to the program's success.

The Allied Health Certificate Program was named an outstanding program by the Department of Education in 1991. Program staff presented a workshop at Springfield Technical Community College in 1993 as part of a conference on Vocational Education. In 1994, program staff conducted a seminar on Teaching Excellence in Austin, Texas.

## ALLIED HEALTH CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

The Allied Health Certificate Programs have been successfully integrating academic and vocational education since 1986. The integration of ESL, other academic education and occupational training is a direct response to the request from business and industry for a competitive workforce. Over 500 limited and native English speaking residents of Greater Boston have been trained for patient care positions in health care facilities. The target population of the program has been low income and/or welfare recipients and most of the students have had limited success in school. The retention rate is outstanding. **The past three cycles (yearly average of 100 students) have had 90% retention over 50% are AFDC recipients** . The program is unique in that it not only prepares students for entry-level positions through its core curriculum, but it also individualizes students' additional coursework so that they take the basic education courses that their individual testing indicates they need. Some innovative aspects of the program are:

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Occupational Skills Training.** There are five certificate programs which have a core curriculum. Four of the programs train for a specific entry level occupation and cross-train the students so that they can be hired as multi-skilled workers. The Health Careers Preparation Certificate is designed for those students interested in health care education only. The programs are:

  Patient Care Assistant
  Medical Assistant
  Medical Lab Assistant
  Phlebotomy Technician
  Health Careers Preparation

- **Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training**. Students take a combination of academic and vocational skills training courses. Limited English speaking students are registered for *ESL for Allied Health* and *ESL Health Communications*. These courses are designed to reinforce the health care curriculum as well as to increase language and skills learning using a reiterative approach to vocational ESL. Based on the program's success with limited English speakers, the program staff has developed *Topics in Health Care* a Reading/English course for those students testing below College Reading/English and starting in September 1995 the program will be offering Fundamentals of Math - using health care problems - in collaboration with the Math Department. Over 60% of these students are testing into developmental Math and Reading. This means that they have severe deficits in basic education skills. For these students to become self sufficient, they need to obtain a measure of reading, writing and math ability.

- **Basic and Advanced College Courses.** Employers are citing the importance of transferrable skills and stating that training for specific occupations in not enough. Students need basic education in English, Mathematics and Computer Operations and they need to develop strong critical thinking skills. Allied Health students take Math, English and Computer class as part of the program. They can also take courses, such as Science, Psychology, etc. which may be prerequisites for Associate Degrees in Health Care.

- **Employment Skills**. In addition to medical and basic skills, employment skills are introduced. Many of these students have never worked. Concepts such as attitude; the need to be dependable, conscientious, and caring; interpersonal skills; cultural differences in the workplace; and career ladders in the health field are introduced in *Health Employment Issues* class and in group counseling. The Program mirrors the work environment. Daily attendance is required and only emergency absences are excused. A student must call if he/she is absent and the counselor follows up on all absences.

- **Experienced and Dedicated Staff that Work as a Team.** The program was designed for the staff to work as a team with often interchangeable roles. Everyone assists in all aspects of the program from

advising, counseling, recruiting, and assessing to the final job placement of the students. Assistant Professor Rita Frey was selected for "Teaching Excellence" by the National Institute of Staff and Organizational Development at the University of Texas. She and Elizabeth Sumorok, Allied Health staff gave a presentation on the program to the conference. Ms. Frey is under contract with Delmar Publishers for a Nursing Assistant textbook for ESL students. Susan Walling, Director, Elizabeth Sumorok and Karen Kautz, Allied Health Instructors recently were keynote speakers at Roxbury Community College. Their talk was "Integrating Academic and Vocational Skills to Meet the Learning Needs of ESL and native English speaking students".

- **Innovative Teaching Methods.** To accommodate various learning styles, the following activities are utilized: lectures, classroom demonstrations, "hands-on" activities in the lab, role playing, small group discussion, tutoring and computer assisted learning. Writing skills are continually reinforced in that the students keep daily journals on their internships. Students are required to use the College Learning Center to listen to program produced audiotapes of hospital conversations and audiotapes of pronunciation drills. Original materials have been developed by program instructors. Professors Frey and Sumorok have adapted and installed exercises from their curriculum on the computers in the Center for Self Directed Learning. This was done through the use of the ALA(American Language Academy) Authoring System software on a CD Rom which generates interactive, computer assisted language exercises. Students can see and listen to lessons simultaneously. There are speaking, listening, dictation and vocabulary exercises with immediate feedback using relevant material from the health care curriculum. They also become familiar with using computer software.

- **College Experience.** Students receive 24-29 college credits which can be transferred into an Associate Degree program and the training needed to obtain a job in today's labor force. Since the program operates under the umbrella of the college, students can take advantage of all of its resources, such as the computer center, the Library, the Center for Self Directed Learning and outside speakers. Upon completion, students can participate in the BHCC graduation ceremony and are awarded a one year certificate. Becoming a college student is a measure of success that gives these students an enormous increase in self-esteem.

- **Practicum.** Academic and skills training are reinforced through a 120 hour internship/Practicum that provides a quality experience in health care as well as in a real job. Every thing becomes more relevant as students try out what they learn in class and bring back to class questions about what they learn on the job. The Practicum experience is critical to the learning experience, providing the essential articulation of the skills taught in the lab and the employment skills needed to get and keep a job. Many of these students have never worked and they need this working experience before they can obtain a job. Students keep a daily journal of their internship activities. This is reviewed weekly by the instructors. Students are given an evaluation at the end of their Practicum from their on site supervisor.

- **Established Relationships with a Variety of Health Care Providers.** The program has 32 contracts in place with local hospitals and health care facilities for internship placement and a very active Advisory Board which assists with curriculum development and job placement. Based upon recommendations from the Advisory Board and Human Resource Departments, the program staff modified the curriculum to provide cross-training in Phlebotomy and EKG. The employers recommended that all students be familiar with computers.

- **Individual and Group Counseling.** Academic and personal counseling begins immediately. Self-esteem and confidence are often lacking. The counselors meet individually with the students as needed and have regular group sessions to discuss issues involving day care, family illness, time management, study skills, and job search activities. Students complete a comprehensive job development/self assessment form which helps them to clarify goals and set realistic objectives.

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- **Individualized Career Plan for Each Student.** Each student completes an individual career plan based on his/her articulated goals. The program stresses that each student has a clear understanding of the steps needed to achieve their long term goals.

- **Job Search Skills and Placement Assistance.** Career services include assessment of strengths and aptitudes, resume writing, job seeking skills and videotaped interviewing. Many of the students have never applied for a job and they need detailed, formal guidance with the procedures involved in getting and keeping a job. The program has developed a workbook which is used in conjunction with the Practicum. After completion of the program, the staff assists with job placement through its contacts with over 100 local employers.

- **Effective Management Tools to Track Students Progress**. In addition to the self assessment form which aids the students to articulate and plan for the future, the program has instituted a plan of individual responsibility. Instead of the instructors giving a monthly review, the students review their progress which is then verified by the instructors. Students assume responsibility for their own achievement.

- **Student Portfolio**. Upon completion of the program the student has a portfolio which contains his/her resume, a sample job application, a copy of their career plan with objectives, and the certificates achieved, i.e. CPR Certificate, Home Health Aide Certificate, State Nurse Aide Certificate, and the Bunker Hill Community College Certificate. In addition it may also contain the Evaluation from the Internship site Supervisor.

- **Outcome Tracking** The program maintains information on the students' outcomes after they finish the program and receive a certificate. Most students obtain jobs immediately (averaging 60%) others continue their education(33%). Many students have set the goal to become a Nurse or other Health care professional as their long range goal, these students often work part time while they continue their education to complete prerequisites.

OVERALL PROGRAM CONCEPT

The overall concept that ties the various components into an integrated whole is the focus on the needs of the health care industry and the preparation of the individual students to meet those requirements.

SUCCESS FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The AHCP gives students the motivation and direction needed in obtaining immediate employment, in formulating a long term plan for a specific health care career and an understanding of career ladders.

In 1991 the program was identified as an "outstanding program" by the Department of Education. The program has been successful in retaining, graduating and placing students in jobs or continuing education. For the academic year 1993/1994, the program had a 90% completion rate and 80% positive outcomes. These become more meaningful in light of the fact that 50% were welfare recipients and many had not had successful track records in school. The program implements many of the School to Work recommendations and could act as a model for these initiatives.

Because this is such an all-inclusive program, it has established an excellent reputation with health facilities throughout the Greater Boston area. It has attracted and offered opportunity to people of many different nationalities and English ability levels. Through its varied programs and internships, it has opened new horizons to students in areas where there is a growing need for trained staff.

## INTEGRATING ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS

The Allied Health Certificate Programs have been successfully integrating academic and vocational education since 1986 and the program was recently highlighted in a monogram written by W. Norton Grubb of the School of Education, University of California at Berkeley. W. Norton Grubb is a leading researcher on vocational education and in his monogram entitled, "A Time to Every Purpose: Integrating Academic and Occupational Education in Community Colleges and Technical Institutes", he described a variety of approaches to integrating academic and occupational education, including the ESL for Allied Health Program and the ESL/Electronics Program at Bunker Hill. Ms. Walling referred to the Perkins Education of 1990, the SCANS, 1991 and the School to Work Legislation 1994.

Susan Walling, the Allied Health Programs' Director, began the presentation by giving an overview of the program and explaining the reasons for its enormous success since its inception in 1986. The integration of ESL, other academic education and vocational training, as implemented by the Allied Health Program, is a direct response to the request from business and industry for a competitive workforce. This means giving students "lifelong" education, relating education to work and making education respond to the workforce realities of the information-age economy of the year 2000.

BACKGROUND OF ALLIED HEALTH CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS:

STARTED AS ESL CLINICAL ASSISTANT
PROGRAM - 1986

RESPONSIVE TO NEED OF STUDENTS AND EMPLOYERS

ENTRY LEVEL HEALTH CARE

MULTIPLE BARRIERS FACED BY TARGET POPULATION:
LANGUAGE, SKILLS, EMPLOYMENT PROCESS
WELFARE/UNDEREMPLOYED/UNEMPLOYMENT

1992- EXPANDED TO ADMIT NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING -

BARRIERS: SINGLE PARENTS, LOW ACHIEVERS, LIMITED SUCCESS IN SCHOOL

100 STUDENTS ANNUALLY

EVOLVED AND GROWN to 5 PROGRAMS offered at present time:

PATIENT CARE ASSISTANT
MEDICAL ASSISTANT
PHLEBOTOMY TECHNICIAN
MEDICAL LAB ASSISTANT
HEALTH CAREER PREPARATION

EXCELLENT RESULTS CONFIRMED BY FOLLOWING STATISTICS:

RETENTION RATE CONSISTENTLY AT 90%

POSITIVE OUTCOMES AT 80%
(JOB AND/OR CONTINUING EDUCATION)

IN ADDITION TO INTEGRATION OF THE ACADEMICS
SPECIAL FEATURES OF ALLIED HEALTH CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS:

- INDIVIDUALIZED ACADEMIC SCHEDULE FOR EACH STUDENT
- GOAL SETTING / CAREER AND ACADEMIC PLAN
- SCHEDULED GROUP COUNSELING
- CAREER COMPONENT STRESSED IN ALL COURSES:
  -INDIVIDUAL CAREER PLAN
  -JOB SEARCH SKILLS
    RESUME
    VIDEOTAPED INTERVIEW
    APPLICATION COMPLETION
    JOB PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE
- INTERNSHIP 120 HOURS
  AFFILIATIONS-30 HEALTH CARE FACILITIES/ JOURNAL WRITING
- SPECIALLY DESIGNED COURSES
- STAFF/TEAM/ MULTIPLE DUTIES
- OUTCOME TRACKING

AS OF 1994:

TRAINED: 472 students

PLACED IN JOBS: 318 students

AVERAGE OF 30% CONTINUE EDUCATION

AS OF 1995:

TRAINED: 560 students

Statistics for job placement and continuing education not available at present time

REASONS FOR INTEGRATING ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

MOTIVATES STUDENTS / ACADEMICS BECOME RELEVANT

RESEARCH IS SHOWING THAT CONTEXTUAL LEARNING IS MORE EFFECTIVE -

DIRECTIVES FROM EMPLOYERS / EDUCATORS - LIFELONG LEARNING
NOT JUST ONE JOB MAY HAVE SIX
NEED TRANSFERABLE SKILLS - NOT JUST SPECIFIC JOB SKILLS

- READING
- BASIC MATHEMATICS
- COMMUNICATION
- PROBLEM SOLVING
- WORKING AS A TEAM
- EMPLOYABILITY (SOFT) SKILLS
  - DEPENDABILITY
  - INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
  - ATTITUDE

## REASONS FOR INTEGRATING ESL WITH A VOCATIONAL SKILLS PROGRAM

- High retention rate of 90%;
- Students seem motivated to learn, less likely to drop out (BHCC; LaGuardia)
- Alleviates frustration at having to stay in ESL class
- Research in adult education indicates learning is more successful when it is taught in context and instructors use material and examples from settings which have some intrinsic meaning to students

- ESL textbooks in general provide a set of language skills through examples that are often unconnected to the lives of the students

- ESL teachers always looking for ways to teach language in a context which has meaning for students and which gives them opportunities for real communication

## ESL FOR ALLIED HEALTH

- Students learn language skills while simultaneously being prepared for specific jobs

- Language learned in ESL class is relevant to students as it reinforces what they have learned in their health care course

- Material and examples used in ESL class drawn from the health care setting

- Students share common theme and interest

## TEAM TEACHING

- ESL and health care instructors collaborate
- ESL instructor has to take time to learn the main content from the health care course
- The health care instructor is responsible for deciding the skills, knowledge and theory students need to know
- ESL course should not replicate exactly material taught in health care class- room and ESL teacher is more than just "a crutch"

## INTEGRATING PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH CARE WITH ESL

### READING SKILLS

- Health care text written especially for ESL students reinforces material from health care class while practicing reading skills
- emphasis on vocabulary building and language exercises

### WRITING SKILLS

- paragraph writing on main topics of health course; note-taking from text book; filling out medical forms

LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

- Audiotapes of conversations in a hospital department
- Computer assisted exercises on content and vocabulary

GRAMMAR

- taught and practiced using content of health course

GROUP AND PAIR WORK

- Students collaborate over work-sheets in class; teaming skills
- Prepare questions to help each other study content material
- Videotaped conversations written and performed by students

The presenter then showed examples of some the special teaching material which the Allied Health Program has developed. Among these were an example of a conversation on audio-cassette, student worksheets of medical charts, a lesson from the computer assisted learning program and finally a videotape of students dramatizing a health-related situation, which they had written themselves.

# HEALTH CAREER PREP

integrating broad vocational interest and academic skills

* time-line for career goals
* science-oriented topics
* in-class reading, practice
* vocabulary in context
* writing skills
* scientific method
* note-taking and oral comprehension
* interest and aptitude tests
* taking practice entrance exam tests
* guest lecturers
* research paper
* research presentation

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# TOPICS IN HEALTH CARE

(developmental reading/vocational integration)

**Vocabulary building** terminology plus 12-15 roots, prefixes, suffixes per week

**Oral practice** oral practice in every class, pronunciation

**Confidence building** empowering topics:

History of Health Care
Microbiology
Disease
Surgery

**Medical awareness** students summarize material from readings and apply own experiences

**Academic skills** Determining meaning from context

Understanding inferences

Grasping main ideas

Recognizing significant supporting details

**Reinforce other courses** Students say "Oh we're talking about that in our lab class!" ask more questions

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MATH FOR ALLIED HEALTH

1.) Tanya and Lisa are arguing about who has more patients. Tanya has two patients in room 201 and one in room 203, one in CCU, and three patients on the third floor. Lisa has four patients on the third floor, plus two in physical therapy, one coming back from OR, and one in X-ray. Who has more patients?

2.) The RN tells you to calculate the pulse deficit for the patient. The pulse deficit is the difference between the apical pulse and the radial pulse.

apical pulse = 78
radial pulse = 69
What is the pulse deficit?

3.) Your patient is on strict I & O. You gave the patient a glass of orange juice that was 8 oz. (240 cc). When the patient finished drinking, you took the glass away and measured what was left. There was 60 cc. How much did the patient drink?

4.) Elena's patient is on a low-calorie diet. The RN says she is only allowed to have 1500 calories a day. For breakfast the patient had a half grapefruit (55 cal), a soft-boiled egg (80 cal), one slice of toast (60 cal), 1 square margarine (35 cal), black coffee (0 cal). At lunch the patient had a piece of baked chicken (180 cal), broccoli (45 cal), corn (170 cal), a small salad with lo-cal dressing (50 cal), and fruit salad for dessert (150 cal).

Add up all the calories. Then subtract from 1500. How many calories may the patient have at dinner?

5.) The N.A. needs to write the patient's temperature in the chart in degrees celsius. But she only has a Fahrenheit thermometer. She asks her supervisor who says take the temperature in Fahrenheit and then convert it using this equation. "Degrees Celsius equals five-ninths times degrees Fahrenheit minus thirty-two."

$C = 5/9 \ (F-32)$

The patient's temperature is 104 degrees Fahrenheit.
What is it in Celsius?

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Before the end of the semester students are able to decipher words such as:

(students reading on 6th grade level)

otolaryngologist

hyperparathyroid

periendocarditis

geriatric-nephrologist-endocrinologist

tracheotomy

arteriorrhaphy

pediatric-neuro-ophthalmologist

gastroenterostomy

paraoptometrics

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# TOPICS IN HEALTH CARE

list of word roots/prefixes/suffixes in one semester

di-
mal-
pre-
pro-
super-
trans-
cardi-
cerebr-
cutane-
derm-
hist-
leuc-
para-
peri-
pharyng-
-stalsis
systol-
vas-
ab-
anti-
bio-
contra-
dys-
gen-
-iatric
idio-
im-
myc-
path-
sym-

angio-
athero-
carcin-
dia-
-gram
-graph
-graphy
hyper-
hypo-
-itis
-osis
-plasty
-rrhea
scler-
thromb-
-trophy
gastro-
neo-
onco-
ophthalmo-
ortho-
oto-
ped-
psycho-
rhino-
thorac-
-ectomy
-rrhaphy
-stomy
-tomy

intra-
inter-
in-
im-
ir-
non-
vivi-
chir-

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# Non-ESL integrated vocational/academic courses

**HEALTH CAREER PREP** course for students interested in broad vocational area of "health" Provides skills to better access these programs



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Non-ESL integrated
vocational/academic courses

**MATH 090 (FOR HEALTH)** existing developmental math course adapted for specific vocational class

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Non-ESL integrated
vocational/academic courses

TOPICS IN HEALTH CARE- non-ESL reading and
vocabulary support in context

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ALLIED HEALTH CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

*Bunker Hill Community College*

# REFLECTIONS ON AN INTERNSHIP

## *1994 - 1995*

**Patient Care Assistant**
**Medical Assistant**
**Phlebotomy Technician**
**Medical Lab Assistant**

*This booklet contains excerpts from Charlestown and Chelsea students' journals, which were kept throughout their Allied Health Certificate Programs internships.*

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**********


Allied Health Certificate Programs
*Bunker Hill Community College*
*250 New Rutherford Avenue*
*Boston, MA 02129-2991*
*(617) 228-2475*


**PROGRAM STAFF**

*Susan Walling, Director*
*Mary Ann Ryan, Program Assistant*
*Rita Frey, Instructor*
*Suzanne Roche, Instructor*
*Liz Sumorok, Instructor*
*Karen Kautz, Instructor*
*Beth Butler, Counselor/Job Developer*
*Linda Crawford, Instructor/Counselor*

## *THINKING ABOUT TOMORROW . . . . . .*

"Tomorrow I start my internship and I am kind of nervous and scared, but I am also very excited about starting. I hope the people there are nice and I hope I know what to do!"

. . . . . **Jennifer Charron**, USA

*Beth Israel Hospital-Health Care Associates, Medical Asst.*

"I have been waiting so long for the internship - now it is only hours away. I feel so anxious, scared and excited at the same time. Anxiety is all over my body because I really don't know what to expect or what they will expect from me. I feel scared because I don't want to make any mistakes with any patient, and I am excited because this is another new, good experience to better my skills."

. . . . . **Damaris Kenny**, Panama

*Massachusetts General Hospital, Patient Care Asst.*

"I feel very excited about starting my internship because everything is new - the job, my co-workers, the instruments. I do not know what kind of people I will meet - will they be good or bad, honest or kind? I want to conduct myself in a perfect way."

. . . . . **Yolaine LaGuerre**, Haiti

*Jewish Memorial Hospital, Medical Lab Asst.*

"I'm feeling very nervous, anxious, excited and scared. I'm worrying about whether I will remember the skills I learned in class. I hope I will learn and experience many different things about medical assisting and the medical field. I also hope the people will be nice."

. . . . . **Georgia Ivey**, USA

*Harvard Community Health Plan-Kenmore Center, Medical Asst.*

"I am getting everything organized for the big day. . . I am looking forward to this day because I want to get more hands-on training and at the same time I want to show my skills and knowledge."

. . . . . **Reneil Carty**, USA

*Children's Hospital, Medical Lab Asst.*

## *GAINING CONFIDENCE IN THOSE FIRST DAYS . . .*

"The first hours of the morning I felt nervous, but later I started to feel more enthusiastic. The N.A., helped us in everything."

. . . . . **Elvira Mejia**, Dominican Republic

*Massachusetts General Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"My first day was very good. I watched a doctor do an EKG on a patient. Then I had a patient and I did my own EKG. I felt scared at first but it was OK. I like working there - they make me feel very welcome."

. . . . . **Donna Yearwood**, Barbados

*Harvard Community Health Plan-Kenmore Center, Medical Asst.*

"Today I had four patients. I did three bedbaths. The nurse was happy. She said I worked perfectly. I hope all the days that I come are as busy as today . . ."

. . . . . **Aracely Mancia**, Honduras

*Massachusetts General Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"It is my second week at internship. I feel much more comfortable with my role as Phlebotomy Tech.. What is it like? I feel happy every day coming here."

. . . . . **Rouzhi Li**, China

*South Cove Community Center, ESL Phlebotomy Tech.*

"I was very nervous, but I relaxed and I finished my work . . .I worked with another Nurse Aide, and she helped me when I couldn't do something. She explained everything!"

. . . . . **Iris Cruz**, Puerto Rico

*Whidden Memorial Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

## *IT GETS EASIER ALL THE TIME . . .*

"I was very busy today. Everybody had something to tell me to do by myself. It's easy now and I'm so happy when they tell me, 'You can do it'. That makes me feel happy! My preceptor asked me what I wanted to know and I said, 'everything!!'"

. . . . . **Nsona Izua**, Zaire

*Brigham & Women's Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"Now I feel better because I have more confidence. When I arrive at the hospital, I can take vital signs and I can assist the patients with more confidence."

. . . . . **Estebania Morillo**, Dominican Republic

*Massachusetts General Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"Now I am taking my own patients. When the lab and EKG requisitions are on the board, I just take them and call my patients. I take vitals, blood and EKGs."

. . . . . **Elisa Tortorici**, USA

*Massachusetts General Hospital-Pre-Admissions Clinic, Medical Asst.*

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"Today I worked with the Physician's Assistant. I observed how to do a physical exam and test for hemoglobin and urine. It was very interesting. I also helped with telephone calls and temperatures."

. . . . . **Irma Ortiz,** Peru

*Madison Park High School Health Services, Medical Asst.*

## *FEELING GOOD ABOUT OURSELVES . . .*

"Today I reaped a great harvest!! My phlebotomy supervisor at the hospital followed me. He wanted to check my skill. He and a classmate watched me draw blood from a patient. If I made some small mistakes, the supervisor corrected it. That lets me progress."

. . . . . **Zi Ling Liu,** China

*South Cove Community Health Center, ESL Phlebotomy Tech.*

"Today was a very busy day. My supervisor was out sick so I had to take on a lot of responsibilities. I had to work with six different doctors. I really had to keep on my toes! I think I did really well because all of the physicians were on schedule. I think the Office Manager was surprised at how well everything went!"

. . . . . **Susan Reid,** USA

*Harvard Community Health Plan-Kenmore Center, Medical Asst.*

"The phlebotomist took me to the floor and gave me labels for four patients. He told me to meet him at the nurse's station when I finished. When I met him at the nurse's station, he said, 'Did you finish?' I said, 'Yes'. He said, 'Really??? Those patients are difficult to draw!' I was happy to hear that."

. . . . . **Marguerite Poufong,** Cameroon

*St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Phlebotomy Tech.*

"My blood pressure skills are getting good. I feel I know what I am doing!"

. . . . . **Felicia Harris,** USA

*Cambridge Hospital-Primary Care Clinic, Medical Asst.*

## *KNOWING OUR CARE IS APPRECIATED . . .*

"Today I spent all my time with patients, which was very nice for me. I like to make patients feel comfortable by always smiling, saying hello and asking how they are. I try to let them know that we are people who really want to help and make them feel good."

. . . . . **Yalitza Molina,** Puerto Rico

*Cambridge Hospital-Riverside Health Center, Medical Asst.*

"All the patients are very nice to me. They say thank you all the time. They say I work very well, and the nurses too!"

. . . . . **Deyanira Santana,** Dominican Republic

*Whidden Memorial Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"Well, when I first went there I was so nervous. Now I feel confident that I can do well. A lot of patients tell me I have a good way of making them comfortable and that I don't hurt them. Some told me I had a good technique!"

. . . . . **Dawn Amato**, USA

*Harvard Community Health Plan-Copley Center*, ***Phlebotomy Tech.***

## *WORKING TOGETHER . . .*

"I learned a lot about the chain of command, carrying out orders from the person in charge, solving grievances among co-workers in a professional manner, passing along information or filling someone in on your duties when you leave to take a break. A lot of communication has to be made to prevent chaos and confusion and mistakes."

. . . . . **Deborah Gerard**, Trinidad

*Brigham & Women's Hospital-"A" Service*, ***Medical Asst.***

"Today we were busy because we did not have students from another school. My RN and I did everything. We took vital signs, washed patients, changed beds and did fingersticks (which I now know how to do). My RN was happy and many times she said to me, 'thank you'! I liked it because the RN needed me all day."

. . . . . **Maria Matlyak**, Ukraine

*Beth Israel Hospital*, ***ESL Patient Care Asst.***

## *THE JOY OF BEING PART OF IT ALL . . .*

"I took care of a patient who has been in isolation, and did almost everything by myself. It's great to work in a hospital. Over there, patients come and go. Every day I go there, there is a new face and a new kind of patient. It's really interesting. I cannot wait for Wednesday!"

. . . . . **Sharine Neptune**, Haiti

*Brigham & Women's Hospital*, ***ESL Patient Care Asst.***

"My satisfaction was great because I felt a member of the team. Anytime they had some blood work to do on any floor, they were not afraid to send me there independently. That made me feel more and more confident and comfortable!"

. . . . . **Brisson Dauphin**, Haiti

*Jewish Memorial Hospital*, ***ESL Phlebotomy Tech.***

"Today is the most beautiful day for me! I feel like I am already employed. I know exactly what to do when I first get here. Li and Maria asked me if I wouldn't like a job here because they enjoy working with me."

. . . . . **Esther Cormier**, Haiti

*Massachusetts General Hospital-Pre-Admission Clinic*, ***Phlebotomy Tech.***

## *THE STAFF CAN BE WONDERFUL . . .*

"I was happy today because my supervisor is a very nice person and he showed me how to draw blood very carefully, step by step. He works so carefully and deals with patients very politely and nicely."

. . . . . **Alan Nguyen**, VietNam
*Beth Israel Hospital, ESL Phlebotomy Tech.*

"I like my Practicum at Children's Hospital. The staff answered my questions. They taught and worked with me until I felt confident enough about a skill to work on my own."

. . . . . **Ying Liao**, China
*Children's Hospital, Medical Lab Asst.*

"The people I worked with helped me by telling me how well I was doing all the time and by answering my questions. Now I feel confident enough on my own because I learned a lot and was treated with respect and kindness from the first day until the last."

. . . . . **Ruth Pamphile**, Haiti
*St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Phlebotomy Tech.*

## *SHARING OUR CULTURE WITH OTHERS . . .*

"One of the nurses called me because a patient didn't speak English. I interpreted for her and I felt good because I was able to explain everything."

. . . . . **Mariana Salinas**, Puerto Rico
*Massachusetts General Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"During my internship, I got experience working with different people who did not speak the same language and came from different cultures...I practiced my English and learned how to talk to patients . . ."

. . . . . **Rafaelina de Jesus**, Puerto Rico
*Whidden Memorial Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"Laurel asked me if I could speak French. I told her that I could speak a couple of words. I spoke Creole with a patient. He was happy to have someone who could speak with him. I felt very happy and proud of myself."

. . . . . **Maria Nevarez**, Puerto Rico
*Massachusetts General Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

## *MAKING OTHERS HAPPY . . .*

"I helped the patient with her lunch and I gave her a massage. She said to me: 'I feel better when you massage me. Thank you!'"

. . . . . **Jaqueline Saavedra**, Cuba
*Massachusetts General Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"Today when I went to see my patients, they were so happy when they saw me and said, 'We're so glad you're here with us again! How long are you going to stay here?' I told them that I wasn't there for a long time,

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just for my internship and that afterwards I would leave. They said, 'Oh, and then are you coming back to visit us?' I said I would probably come every weekend."

. . . . . **Gilberthe Louis**, Haiti
*Jewish Memorial Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"There was one patient I got to talk to for a while. She was very nice to talk to. I felt bad for her, though, because she had almost everything wrong with her. But she seemed very happy. I guess that is all that matters."

. . . . . **Brandy Capra**, USA
*Brigham & Women's Hospital-BIMA, Medical Asst.*

"I had a patient who asked me why I liked working with people. I told her I liked to see people happy and to help them while they are sick. It makes them feel special. She said she was grateful for what I did for her and it made me feel great the whole day."

. . . . . **Marie Jones**, USA
*Massachusetts General Hospital, Patient Care Asst.*

## *GAINING NEW SKILLS . . .*

"Today I was busy every minute. I weighed patients and escorted them to their doctors' rooms. I assisted with two pap smears and a wet prep for two different doctors all by myself and got it right!"

. . . . . **Gail Burke**, USA
*Beth Israel Hospital-Health Care Associates, Medical Asst.*

"I learned how to talk and deal with patients - how to sit and listen but also let them know I could only stay briefly. I also learned the importance of a lot of the tests that are performed in the laboratory."

. . . . . **Lalani Thompson**, USA
*Melrose-Wakefield Hospital, Medical Lab Asst.*

"I arrived early today and started doing my normal duties. Then the nurse showed me how to use the Glucometer machine. Afterwards, I practiced this myself and performed the tests without help. I did the test for a baby who was diabetic and I bathed the baby after that. It was a good day!"

. . . . . **Myrna Maldonado**, Puerto Rico
*Brigham & Women's Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"My patient needed help from me. First, I washed her face, gave her a bedbath, made the bed, offered a bedpan, changed her dressing and fed her. I was feeling more confident and sure of myself when I did something for her." . . . . . **Huyen Do**, Vietnam
*Massachusetts General Hospital, Patient Care Asst.*

## *THE LEARNING NEVER STOPS . . .*

"In my internship I had the opportunity to work with instruments that were new to me. I had never used them in the Vietnamese hospital. I learned that instruments are different between laboratories."

. . . . . **Thanh Luong**, Vietnam
*Neponset Health Center, Medical Lab Asst.*

"The nurse came to me and showed me how a feeding tube is changed . . .then she showed me how to do a fingerstick. I liked this day because I was so busy that I went to lunch at 2:00 PM!"

. . . . . **Daisy Garcia**, Puerto Rico
*Brigham & Women's Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"Most of all, I learned a lot about people. Some of it was good, some was not so good. All in all, I left HCHP with a lot of knowledge that has enriched my life."

. . . . . **Phyllis Wooden**, USA
*Harvard Community Health Plan-PO Square Center, PhlebotomyTech.*

"My experience at my internship was a good one because I felt comfortable . . . I had a chance to learn more things than I ever expected."

. . . . . **Rosemaine Desjardins**, Haiti
*Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center, Phlebotomy Tech.*

"I learned more than just blood. I learned blood cultures, throat cultures and EKGs, stat tests, computers and techniques that will carry me through the rest of my life."

. . . . . **Joseph VonHandorf**, USA
*Harvard Community Health Plan-PO Square Center, Phlebotomy Tech.*

## *FACING SERIOUS ILLNESS AND EVEN DEATH . . .*

"I answered a call light and it was a lady that had chemotherapy. She was complaining of pain, she was crying and depressed. I tried my best to calm her down. I called the nurse and she gave her medication. I was touched by this. It is hard sometimes to see people suffer. After I left the hospital, I thought how precious life is."

. . . . . **Ruben Morales**, Puerto Rico
*Brigham & Women's Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"I was sitting at the front desk when a patient came up to me to check in. He looked pale and was sweaty. Then he told me he had pain and tightness in his chest and arm. I paged a nurse and explained what was going on. He was later admitted to CCU. Boy, my heart was in my throat!!"

. . . . . **Martha Peterson**, USA
*Beth Israel Hospital-Radiation Therapy, Medical Asst.*

"Today I saw the doctor and RN doing a 'code' to save a patient's life. The RN who was the patient's nurse felt upset because the patient died

of a heart attack. I was very upset too. After that, I learned how to provide postmortem care."

. . . . . **Hong-Lien Nguyen**, Vietnam
*Massachusetts General Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

## *LOOKING FORWARD TO A HEALTH CARE CAREER . .*

"I enjoyed my internship. It was a beautiful and interesting experience. I learned many things and I got a lot of experience. I feel happy that the patients and staff appreciated what I did. I can see that in health care every day you learn new skills but some days you learn something even more important, you learn from your patients!"

. . . . . **Olga Campos**, Colombia
*Massachusetts General Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"I think it is very interesting working in a laboratory, but at the same time there is a lot of responsibility and pressure because you have to do every test without any error since you are determining the health status of people. The treatment and medicines a person gets depends on the results you get. So it is a very delicate job which requires concentration, dedication and professionalism."

. . . . . **William Villalta**, El Salvador
*Children's Hospital, Medical Lab Asst.*

## *IT'S HARD TO SAY GOODBYE . . .*

"Today was a special day for me. All the nurses were very nice and they gave me a big surprise - a gift and a card from them. I am never going to forget this day!"

. . . . . **Arelis Matos**, Dominican Republic
*Melrose-Wakefield Hospital, ESL Patient Care Asst.*

"On my last day, I thanked everyone for putting up with me for 120 hours. . . Some of the nurses said that they will miss me and that they all put in a good word for me. When I was leaving, I felt like I wanted to cry!"

. . . . . **Judy Anderson**, Trinidad
*Cambridge Hospital-Windsor Health Center, Medical Asst.*

***The Allied Health Certificate Programs placed 64 students in clinical internships at 21 different health care facilities in the Greater Boston Area this year.***

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